

INTRODUCTION

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Welcome to the Proceedings to the 31st Annual Conference of the International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers: Information for Responsible Fisheries: Libraries as Mediators, which was held in cooperation with the Fisheries Department, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in Rome (Italy) October 10-14, 2005.

The conference programme explored the role of libraries as mediators in providing access to information across disciplines from global sources; opportunities through partnerships and collaboration to promote shared standards and methodologies, especially in support of a digital framework to improve access to aquatic science information; Open Access and Open Archives - the need for new skills and stronger collaboration between libraries.

Sessions covered the creation, use, and understanding of innovative information management techniques and technology, both existing and emerging, which facilitate easy and equitable access for target audiences. The challenge of managing and disseminating information produced by their own institution balanced with providing access to information across disciplines from global sources is faced by all libraries.

Special sessions on fisheries related information - oceanography through biology to social aspects and trade - highlighted the role of information in support of implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

The conference had 89 participants from 38 countries (FAO staff not included), one third of them were first timers. I am very happy that many participants from developing countries, three of them with IAMSILIC funding, were able to attend the conference.

I would like to thank all presenters of papers and posters for their contribution to the conference, as well as the conference committee for its fruitful work, hereunder Kristen Anderson for editing the proceedings. Especial thanks are extended to the local organizers Jean Collins and the FAO FIDI team for their immense work.

The 2007 Conference, *IAMSILIC: Every Continent, Every Ocean*, will be held October 9-12 in Portland, Oregon, USA. Joan Parker will be the Conference Convener.